THE NEW JERSEY EXONUMIA SOCIETY
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MEMBERSHIP DUES: REGULAR.... $6.00, ASSOCIATE...$3.00, JUNIOR (-18)...$4.00
LIFE MEMBER...$60.00

EDITOR'S CORNER

The results of our attempt to interest and attract junior members by offering a free, one year membership was quite disappointing. We did not receive a single application from any of the NJ Coin clubs we contacted. Any suggestions to help us reach this goal will be appreciated.

Wanted, your article, photo, sketch, etc. of exonumia. At present, I have nothing on hand to publish in Jerseyana. Please make an effort to submit anything at all.

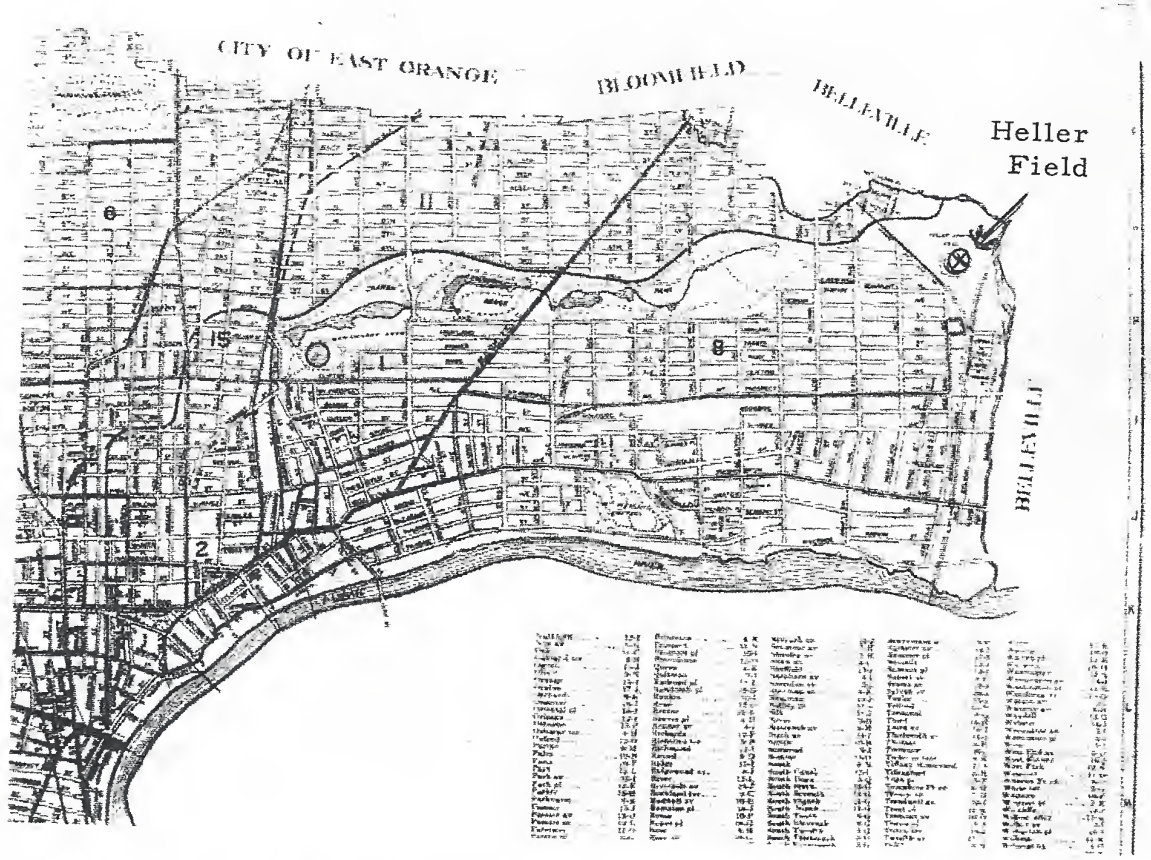
Al Zaika

Dues Renewal Reminder

Please remit your dues payment for 2003 before January 1st. Do it now before the hectic holidays arrive. Annual dues are still only $6.00 and checks should be made payable to NJES and mailed to Al Zaika, PO Box 65, Bellmawr, NJ 08099-0065. Thank you for your cooperation.

Newark's Heller Field

Last year I noticed a want ad in a collectors newspaper, seeking anything related to Heller Field, an airport in Newark, NJ. I was born and raised in Newark and had not knowledge of Heller Field and wanting to learn about this airport, I wrote to the person who placed this ad, Mr. Ralph Valles, and asked for some information of Heller Field. Shortly after, Mr. Valles sent me a detailed history, some photos, maps, illustration, and related items and kindly gave me permission to print his history of Heller Field, but not the other items. Mr. Valles is not aware of any medals that were issued to commemorate Heller Field, but mentioned that there may be a commemorative plaque at the Newark Airport. The location is unknown to him. The first part of Mr. Valles article follows. It will be continued in the next issue of Jerseyana.



A 1920 map of the northern part of Newark. Heller Field is seen at the upper right edge of map, next to Belleville.

By Ralph Valles

Late, in 1918, the Post Office Department, in order to expedite the air mail, began looking for a more strategic location for its air mail terminal in the New York metropolitan area. The Post Office needed a new air mail terminal which was closer to the city in which incoming and outgoing air mail could be more quickly transported between the main post office in New York, and the airfield.

At that time the postal air mail terminal was located in Belmont Park, Long Island. This terminal airfield did not have a quick enough transport into the city other than the Long Island Railroad. At best, the mail was relayed to the main post office an hour after landing. Another problem was that most sites in Long Island were suseptible to the smoke and fog of New York, which delayed the mail even more because of the mail planes difficulty in finding the airfield.

In the fall of 1918, the Newark Board of Trade proposed to the Post Office Department to consider a site for an air mail terminal in Newark. At first, the Post Office rejected the proposal on the grounds that the Department's limited budget would not allow funds to clear and develop the the land to airfield specifications. However, in January, 1919 the Newark Board of Trade offered the Post Office a tract of land in the northern part of Newark, free of charge. The Post Office became interested and decided to examine what was referred to as the Heller tract, a fifty acre parcel of land, in the Forest Hills section of Newark.

On January 29, 1919 the Post Office Department and the Newark Board of Trade came to an agreement on the use of the Heller tract. The terms of the agreement were that the Post Office Department could use the Heller tract for a trial period of two years, free of charge, after which, if proved successful, Paul E. Heller, the owner, would receive $150,000 for the property. It was furthur agreed that the land would be cleared of trees, leveled, and graded, and hangers built without cost to the government.

It was estimated that the cost of this agreement would be $25,000 which was collected in the form of contributions from the business community, and Newark's citizens. The City of Newark refused to grant any money to develop a piece of land owned by a private individual because it was claimed to be illegal.

The job of raising $25,000 for clearing the Heller tract, and build new hangers was assigned to the Advertising Club of Newark. They in turn created " The Airport Commitee " to run the campaign drive. Unfortunately, by the end of April, 1919 only $7,000 was collected. However, in the first week of May, the Federal Government stepped in and announced that it would supply the Hangers. This significantly brought down the cost of the project and allowed work to begin on May 16th.

The task of clearing the Heller tract was underestimated. It was thought that clearing the land would only take

six to eight weeks. By the middle of June only one-hundred trees had been removed. Heavy spring rains also hampered the project. It took the rest of the summer to clear the field of trees.

In August, as the terrain was being prepared one hanger was built. Originally, plans called for three hangers t be built but as the field was developed it was seen that it would be smaller than desired and one hanger was all there was space for.

In September, the field was leveled, and a cinder packed runway layed out running east to west. It was only 900 to 1,000 feet long, much shorter than had been planned because of the smallness of the field, and like the hanger there was only room for one runway, and a very short one at that. In November, a new inovation in aerial navigation was installed at Heller Field- a low frequency radio station. The station was a crude example of todays low frequency radio stations.

Heller Field was the name given to the new air terminal by the Post Office Department. Flight testing on the new airfield was conducted in November, 1919 and was concluded with the landing of a twin-engined Martin mail plane, number 203, on December 1, 1919.

The exact location of Heller Field in the Forest hills section of Newark, was between the divergent tracks of the Greenwood Lake division of the Erie Railroad, and it's Orange New Jersey Branch. The main line ran northwesterly and the Orange Branch curved widely to the southwest. At the east end of the field, adjacent to the divergin tracks, was located the Tiffany's silver factory with it's two chimneys, one eighty feet high and the other about ninety feet. At the west end lay the Morris Canal and First River which formed the western boundry of the field. Adjoining the field, also at the western end, was the Forest Hills Golf course, about 400 to 500 feet wide. It is unclear whether it was located at the northwest or southwest part of the field, but indications favor the northwest location. Access to the field was by a dirt road, possibly an extension of second street (now Manchester Place).

Heller Field was not a pilots field. It was too small and obstacles were a problem. Take-offs and landings could only be made to the east or to the west, and the chimneys of the Tiffany factory were a constant problem. If prevailing winds necessitated landing from east to west, a pilot would start his approach from the Passaic River, about a mile east of the field. His approach was to line up with the Erie railroad tracks before it diverged left and right. As the Pilot got closer to the field, his glide path took him down by the stacks of the Heller File factory and then past an 80-foot spire of the Tiffany factory. As he continued, he flew between the chimney stack of Tiffanys and an adjacent hill. This approach was made low and with power. After passing Tiffany's chimney, the pilot was 500 feet from the edge of the runway. at this point he had to be just over 75-feet above the ground and then he had to execute a twenty-degree turn to the left to line up with the runway and then immediately touch down. All in

one maneuver, and at a speed at or above stalling. If pilots landed too short they would wash out their landing gear in a gully filled with debris. If they overshot the edge of the runway they would wind up in the Morris Canal, because the mail planes had no brakes only tail shids. Earthen embankments were later placed along the canal to stop the rolling aircraft but this was only partially successful.

Landings from the west to east were little better. The Morris Canal had to be hurdled before immediately touching down, again, at speeds at or just above stalling. If a pilot overshot the edge of the runway in this direction a debris filled gully was waiting for him at the other end.

Occasionally, the wind direction made it impossible for the pilots to land on the field from either east or west and instead they would land on the fairway of the Forest Hills Golf Club using its high tee-off mound with sloping sides to stop.

The first air mail into Heller Field was on Saturday, December 6, 1919. Pilot Walter H. Stevens flew a twin engined Martin mail plane from Washington, D.C. with 700 pounds of mail. A second plane came in two hours later, at 3:25 P.M., from Cleveland by pilot Paul W. Smith. All mail was gathered and placed onto a post office motor truck then left and went to the Market Street depot where it was placed on a train to New York.

The first mail to fly out of Heller Field ocurred on Monday, December 8, 1919. The Washington mail was flown by pilot Frederick A. Robinson, who took-off at 6:44 A.M. The Chicago mail left at 8:45 A.M. in the charge of Paul W. Smith.

The formal opening and dedication of Heller Field was held on Monday, December 15, 1919. The ceremonies were held at the hanger with about 1,000 persons present. It was a very cold day and addresses were made from inside the hanger. The group of officials attending the opening included the following: Newark Mayor Charles P. Gullen; Second Assistant Postmaster General, Otto Praeger; Postmaster Sinnot of Newark; Thomas Wheles, Representative of the Post Office Department; Postmaster Walter Burton of Brooklyn; Newark City commissioner Archibald; and Paul E. Heller, whose parcel of land made the new eastern terminus possible.

Heller Field was formally turned over to the Government at 1:30 P.M. by Theoore S. Fettinger, Chairman of the executive commitee of the aerial mail field. Shortly before, a Washington mail plane arrived at the field, at 12:55 P.M. Speeches were made by Mayor Gullen, Mr. Praeger, and others throughout the day.

Ever, since the opening of Heller Field , the Pilots came to condemn it. There were major accidents, numerous mishaps and near misses. Pilots claimed that the smallness of the field, obstacles, and rough conditions would not permit them to fly there with any reasonable amount of safety. A steady stream of broken wings, wrecked landing gear, and shattered propellers attested to this fact.

Wanted: Items related to the old Jersey City Stadium, (AKA) Roosevelt Stadium, and Roosevelt Stadium in North Bergen/Union City, NJ. George Dorsey, 168 E. Spring Valley Ave., Maywood, NJ 07107

Wanted: Bimetallic tokens from any state, NJ tokens, Lords Prayer medals, (13-19mm), Sofspra car wash tokens and Salada Tea baseball coins. (1962). Rocco DiGiacomo, 42 Sunset Dr., Mt. Holly, NJ 08060-1915.

Wanted: Encased cents and other coins, engraved coins, pop-outs, scenic love tokens, hobo nickels, potty dollars, just about anything made from coins. Send for my offer or call me at 407-352-7807. Bob Slawsky, PO Box 864, Windermere, FL 34786.

Obsolete or Broken Banknotes: From all counties in New Jersey, as well as Merchant Scrip, wanted for collection. Send photocopy or description. (Weit or Hexby #) to Tom O'Mara, 55 Rumson Road, Rumson, NJ 07760.

Dog License Tags: If you do not read ***PAW PRINTS***, you do not know dog license tags. Complimentary copy on request. Bill Bone, Editor, 928 S.R. 2206, Clinton, KY 42031.

Ocean County: Collecting and Researching all Ocean County obsolete and broken banknotes and merchant scrip. Want anything from Toms River 1850 to 1960, also notes issued in Bricksburg 1840's, Manchester 1840's....BUY - SELL - TRADE. Bob Mitchell, 2775 S.E. Eagle Dr., Port St. Lucie, FL 34984-8919.

Hard Rock Café Pins Wanted. Will trade my Jersey Tokens & Medals and/or Playboy roulette chips for Hard Rock...Archie Black, PO Box 63, Brick, NJ 08723.

Wanted: Tickets, Transfers, Photographs, and any other items related to streetcars or busses in Scranton, Pa. Charles Wrobleski, 206 Green Street, Clarks Green, PA 18411.

New Jersey Amusement Token Listing. 76-page listing available for $7.00 postpaid from Bob Schopp, 16 Sanbert Circle, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690.

Wanted: Both BPOE and IBPOEW tokens and medals. Write first describing and pricing your items. J.M. Boswell, PO Box 428, Gambrills, MD 21054.

Wanted: Edison collector seeks Thomas Edison memorabilia, esp. medals, tokens, and souvenirs. Please write with full description and price. Also interested in first and second-hand accounts of Mr. Edison and his legend. George Skic E-Mail: mercerhill@peoplepc.com.

Lotz Bros. Dairy, Inc.: Clifton, NJ Milk cap (unused) $1.00 & SASE. First National Bank of Paterson, Clifton-Parker Ave. office, 1940's-50's. Deposit receipt $1.00 & SASE. Steven Kawalec, PO Box 4281, Clifton, NJ 07012.

For Sale: Individuals interested in the "31 Wooden Dollars" wooden flat, celebrating the 31st Anniversary Banquet of the ocean County Coin Club in NJ can obtain one by sending $1 and a SASE to: O.C.C.C., 65-16th St., Toms Rivers, NJ 08753. The collectible reflects the club logo, a Graf Zeppelin and a Shrimp Boat on the reverse, based on the banquet being held at the Shrimp Box in Point Pleasant Beach, NJ.

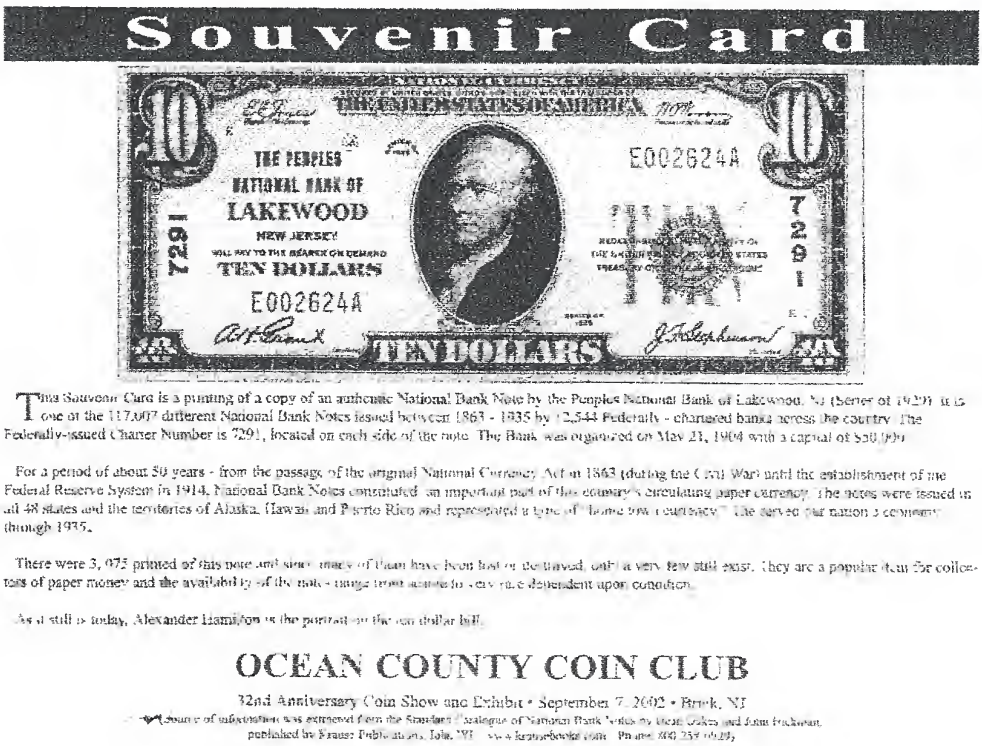
Wanted: Large 73mm Lucky Souvenir penny (Indian Head) with swastikas in the headband. E-mail gptokens @worldnet.att.net or write Gary Patterson, 10-4th St. Manchester, NJ 08759.

Wanted: New Jersey mining tokens and other exonumia related to mining activities in NJ, especially NJ Zinc Co. Please send a description of what you have. Frank Steimle, PO Box 465, Allenhurst, NJ 07711.

Wanted: Will pay up to $125 for WW-II medals issued by states, counties, cities, and towns. Please write first. Lou Small, Box 19262-NJ. Jacksonville, FL 32245-9262.

For Sale: Ballentine Beer red, white, and blue poker ships, depicting the famous 3 rings logo. $3.00 and SASE. Al Zaika, PO Box 65, Bellmawr, NJ 08099-0065.

PA Token & Medal Meeting: On the first Saturday of each month from Sept. through Dec. there will be a token trading meeting of the Bucks County TAMS at the Bensalem Library in Hulmeville, PA, just across the river from Burlington. For directions e-mail rdschopp@aol.com or write me at Bob Schopp, 16 Sanbert Circle, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690-2510.



This souvenir card, issued by the Ocean County Coin Club, can be obtained by sending $2.00 to O.C.C.C., 65-16th St., Toms River, NJ 08753.

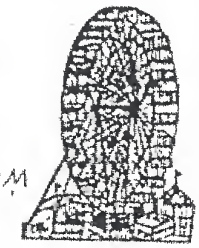
WANTED:

Tokens, medals, mirror cards,
paper scrip, etc.
Premium prices paid for N.J. items needed

A varied inventory available for sale
Your want lists are always welcome

AL ZAIKA
P.O. Box 65
Bellmawr, N.J. 08031

Buying
Coins...Tokens...Medals...World's Fair Memorabilia...
Any Ferris Wheel Items...Old Toys...Model Kits...
Collectibles



Steve's Coins
PO Box 83
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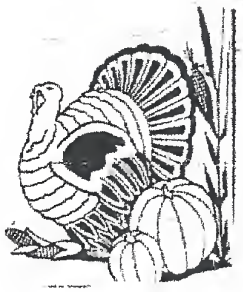
(973)627-0705
E-MAIL- SMIDDLETOY@AOL.COM
Steve Middleton
ANA ANS TAMS WFCS



Happy Holidays

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